The Season Of The Weird continues. The Royals dropped a touchdown and a field goal on the Tribe in the first inning, yet the Indians fought back from the 10-1 deficit to tie the game at 13 in the top of the 9th, then won it with two runs in the 10th. In todays B-List, Buff recaps the weirdness from last night, as the Indians became only the second team in MLB history to come back and win after giving up ten runs in the 1st inning.

The ancients terrified impressionable youths with tales of the manticore, Scylla and Charybdis, and the gorgons. In the Middle Ages, tales of witchcraft and demonic possession caused even the bravest men's hearts to skip a beat. Today, the mythical Kansas City Royals bullpen causes fear and despair to those not clever enough to know it does not really exist.

1) My dribble glass runneth over To describe Paul Byrd's outing as "bad" is insufficient: I don't care if 6 of the NINE runs were "unearned," when you give up four times as many hits as you record outs, and everyone you allow to reach base scores, that has to be considered unfathomably bad. As I wrote earlier, I don't care how many outs you *should*
have gotten, a home run should
never
be considered an "unearned run." I understand the philosophy, I simply find it a festering pustule of a philosophy. Yes, the error was bad. But the man gave up 8 hits, including a triple and a pair of taters! Do you know how hard it would be to give up 8 hits, including 2 homers, and have that yield 3 runs (the number of "earned runs" Byrd was charged with)?
Byrd appeared like he MIGHT settle down after getting two quick outs after Brown's single (including two swinging strikes to Shealy), but four straight hits and 5 runs later, Byrd's night was mercifully over. Jason Davis appeared, promptly gave up a tenth run, and that was enough of that.
I mean, there's not a lot of tremendous insight to impart here: Byrd stunk.

2) A walk down memory lane

Ferd Cabrera has nasty stuff. He can pile up strikeouts with the best of them. In 1 1/3 innings of work, Cabrera struck out 4, all swinging. That's brutal, and if you're counting at home, that means all four outs were swinging Ks.
Ferd Cabrera also has "accuracy problems." He throws too many pitches and walks too many guys. Walking guys is the cardinal sin of the setup man, since walked batters often

come back to hurt you in the form of runs scored. Cabrera got lucky last night in that no one scored on his watch, but he walked one guy in 1/3 of an inning in the 6th (to load the bases!), and two more in the full seventh (to load the bases!). I don't know what will convince Ferd to throw strikes. Or pitch with his eyes open. Or stop wearing the Vaseline suit.
Rafael Betancourt DOES throw strikes. Nothing BUT strikes. So it's a problem when his strikes don't move, because people hit them. But last night, this didn't happen: two perfect innings, two strikeouts, 16 strikes in 21 pitches, good night now.
Fausto Carmona is a basket case. At what point can we ask for a flip of him an Eddie Moo and let him work out some problems in Beefalo? I mean, is he the guy who threw 7 strikes in a perfect 8-pitch 5th, inducing a pair of groundouts and a three-pitch whiff of high-contact Mark Grudzielanek? Or is he the guy who imploded to give up two doubles off the wall, walked weak-hitting Paul Bako, balked two runners into scoring position, and generally pitched like a bag of meat?
Jason Davis is very effective at eating meaningless innings, so he has that going for him, which is nice.

3) The return of the "power arms"

One of the mantras of years past was to stock a bullpen full of "power arms," the kind of hard throwers with sliders that can strike people out and saw through a lineup. These guys were primarily right-handed. In Carmona, Cabrera, Betancourt, and Mastny, the Indians got 6 innings of relief with 10 strikeouts: discounting Carmona, the Indians got 4 1/3 innings of shutout relief with 8 strikeouts. That's awfully good.
Since I'm here, I should say that Tom Mastny has still done nothing to decrease his chances of being the next cursed player (as my new Favorite). Neat factoid that fits nowhere else: Mastny was born in Indonesia (although is not of Indonesian descent, as far as I can tell). A graphics search last night showed that there are two pictures of Tom Mastny in existence: shaking hands with Vic Martinez after the Tampa Bay save, and his "mug shot." He smiles in neither.
4) Everybody hits, and really far, too

Not only did every Indian batter (including pinch-hitter Shin-Soo Choo) get a hit, every Indian batter got an EXTRA-BASE hit. Seven doubles, three homers, and a triple later, the Tribe had fewer singles than doubles. Hector Luna had a particularly good day, with a pair of singles, a pair of doubles, a pair of runs scored, and 4 RBI. Look, Franklin Gutierrez and Aaron Boone each had an extra-base hit. How often does THAT happen?
By the way, Boone, Peralta, and Hafner each drew a pair of walks to boot. Hafner was also plunked, but I'm not sure he noticed.

5) A surprisingly duck-free pond

Hey, we left 8 on base, 5 in scoring position, but we had TWENTY-FOUR baserunners (including 2 HBP). We actually were pretty efficient at turning runners into runs.

By the way, the Royals left 7 men in scoring position (including the two pairs mentioned above left by Ferd) and 11 overall. One timely hit and that game was

over
. On the other hand, the game seemed
over
after the first (or at least the 8th), so what do I know?

6) No, after you, I insist

Jason Michaels may not be much of a hitter (in the hitting orgy last night, he managed a double in 4 AB), but he certainly isn't selfish: he had both a sacrifice bunt in the tenth and a sac fly earlier in the game. While the 8-hole was racking up 6 AB, Michaels got by with 4; admittedly, Hafner only had three, but that's because he GOT ON BASE the three other times via a pair of walks and the plunking. Michaels did drive in three runs, but it's nice to see him get a bunt down after being so dismal at it early in the season.

7) Managerial Head Scratchers

Why is Jason Michaels bunting in the tenth? I understand the logic: in a tie game, get the man into scoring position with one out and the heart of the lineup coming up.

But the logic is crappy: the guy you want up there is Travis Hafner, and if you sacrifice Sizemore to second, that's the ONE batter the team DOESN'T have to face. Ryan Garko made the whole thing moot and we won the game, but I'm loathe to give up an out AND render our best hitter inert in one "swell foop."

8) Gotta say it!

A two-out game-tying pinch-hit triple is about the coolest thing ever. Especially since Choo hasn't been hitting well. Clutch! (Yes, it still counts, even off Obelix Bulgo.)